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Crisis Management For Safe Schools

This document is a DRAFT section from the upcoming Safe Schools Leadership Handbook.

In a "School Emergency Management Survey" conducted in 1999 by Employers' Mutual Company (EMC) at the request of the School Violence Crisis Intervention Task Force, a little over 98% of 291 Iowa school districts and Area Education Agencies responding reported that they had emergency plans, yet almost 40% indicated that they would like technical assistance in developing a "community-wide crisis management plan." This section of the handbook is intended to provide such assistance.

Although crisis management involves both natural disasters, such as fires and tornadoes, and violent and/or criminal acts, the focus of information in this handbook is on school safety related to violence. Most districts in Iowa have plans on file to cover the entire spectrum of crisis situations. Many of the procedures and processes contained herein are applicable to all aspects of crisis planning. The primary intent of this section of the notebook is to provide guidance to those who are adding a school violence component to an existing plan or to provide a framework for reviewing and, if necessary, improving an existing plan that already addresses school violence.

This Crisis Management Plan should be part of an overall four-faceted School Safety Plan that includes prevention, intervention, preparedness, and crisis response.

Crisis Management
Planning for Safe Schools in Iowa

The goal of safe school planning is to create a positive, welcoming, school environment that is free of violence, drugs, fear, and intimidation, where teachers can teach and students can learn. Establishment of a safe school plan, of which a crisis management plan is a part, is a long term and complex process. The key to safe Iowa schools is prevention and preparedness. This section of the handbook is a general guide for districts to follow in preparing the crisis management portion of a safe school plan for the district. The format and content of plans should be a local decision developed through an ongoing and comprehensive collaborative local process. The information and templates included in the handbook are intended as tools to be used as needed in order to help make the process thorough without being cumbersome

Authority to guide development of a safe schools plan is derived through Federal and State laws, policies of local boards of education and direction-setting by the superintendent who oversees plan development and implementation. A district's school board adopts the final plan. In order to implement the direction set, a superintendent may appoint a School Safety Team and delegate to it responsibility for writing the plan and assistance in providing oversight of its implementation, including continuous review. In addition, a school-based Emergency Management Team (EMT) may be appointed to serve as first responders to a crisis before arrival of trained community responders.

A well-designed crisis management plan has three major components: Preparedness, Response, and Recovery. *Preparedness* activities incorporate planning, training, and practice to ensure that a school is ready should an emergency situation arise. *Response* is the set of activities that are carried out in a crisis situation. Finally, and of great importance, are the things schools do in the aftermath of a tragic occurrence, sometimes called the *Recovery* phase.

Because violence prevention is key to maintaining safe schools, the bulk of the material in this handbook that precedes this section deals with proven prevention methods that place special emphasis on school climate. This section of the handbook has three parts that address 1) the three phases of crisis management, 2) the warning signs that can alert schools to a pending violent situation, and 3) a set of templates that schools may use, if they so choose, to develop their own crisis plans. The last section of the handbook is reserved as a place where a school can put its own plan, permitting everything to be kept in one place.

Seven key elements of violence prevention identified in the General Accounting Office's 1999 report *School Safety: Promising Initiatives for Addressing School Violence* provide guidance for plan development. These elements are:

1. *A comprehensive approach.* The complex nature of violence requires a multi-faceted response, including provision of a variety of services and linking school and community.

2. *Early start and long-term commitment.* Programs should start in elementary school and provide sustained intervention over multiple years.

3. *Strong leadership and disciplinary policies.* School faculty and administration must provide clear, consistent, unambiguous student codes of conduct.

4. *Staff development.* Key staff should be trained in handling disruptive students and in mediating conflicts.

5. *Parental involvement.* Parents should be encouraged to become increasingly involved in school violence prevention activities and other school activities.

6. *Interagency Partnerships.* Programs should establish collaboration between schools, local business, law enforcement, social service agencies, and private groups to create a net of community support.

7. *Culturally sensitive and developmentally appropriate approach.* Programs should be sensitive to racial, ethnic and cultural norms.

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Section I. Preparedness

"Be prepared" is the watchword for school safety. An important step to providing a safe environment for learning is developing a comprehensive Crisis Management Plan.

A. Roles and Responsibilities

School Safety is the responsibility of everyone – staff, students, parents, and the community. Schools must reach out to community members – law enforcement, the fire department, the medical community, human service agencies, emergency personnel, and the business community - so that each segment can be represented on a School Safety Team.

1. District Crisis Management Plan

The goal of a comprehensive school safety plan is the health, safety, and well being of *all* students and staff, and this goal must be embedded in policies and procedures at both the district level and the building level.

Leadership from the superintendent is crucial in developing a District Crisis Management plan and in recruiting the members of the team that coordinate, monitor and help implement the plan.

Members of a District School Safety Team
Representatives from each of the areas below are recommended for inclusion on a planning team charged with the responsibility of school safety. This team may be a subcommittee of the School Improvement Action Committee (SIAC) or the SIAC may assume this responsibility for itself if the team composition is appropriate and adequate time can be devoted to safety issues. In smaller districts, one person may represent more than one of the suggested team members. A District administrator should chair this team.

- Superintendent
- Personnel from Operations
    -- Business, Safety, Media Relations
    -- Transportation, Maintenance, Food Service
- Building Team Representatives
- School Board Member
- Two (2) Student Representatives*
- Parent Representative
- Community Emergency Response Representative
- Community Business Representative
- Community Media Representative
- Community Law Enforcement

* *Students are more likely to attend meetings and make contributions if at least two serve on committees largely composed of adults.*

Roles and Responsibilities of the District School Safety Team

The Team should develop a district-wide plan that includes preparedness, response, and recovery measures and addresses the safety issues of the entire district. The team has the following general responsibilities.

- Review policies and procedures in support of safe schools and modify, if needed. (See Section IB, "Safety Audits.")
- Conduct safety and emergency equipment audits of the district and its facilities. (See Section IB, "Safety Audits.")
- Develop a Crisis Management Plan that can be adapted to fit specific building needs. (See Section V, "Plan Development.".)
- Establish a budget for training, equipment and supplies needed to implement safety plans for the district and each building. Include costs for building and classroom emergency kits. (See Section IE.)
- Develop a mechanism for students to report anonymously threats of violence and the presence of guns or drugs in school.
- Review, approve, and coordinate each building plan.
- Provide training for each Building School Safety Team. (See Section IC, "Training.")
- Coordinate with local emergency management agencies.
- Name a district media spokesperson and develop and implement a plan for communication with the media. (See Section IG, "Dealing with t he Media.")
- Communicate with parents and community.
- Be prepared to assist as needed each building in times of emergency.
- Schedule drills to test crisis response and recovery plans. (See Section IF, "Drills and Exercises.")
- Evaluate plans and responses to any crisis that may occur, and modify if necessary.

2. Building Crisis Management Plan

As with the district plan, the goal of a building Crisis Management Plan is the health, safety, and well-being of students and staff, and this goal must be similarly embedded in both policy and procedure.

The principal and administrative staff must provide the leadership to make the building plan a priority. Recruiting members of the team, scheduling and attending team meetings and safety training will take essential administrative and staff time.

Members of the Building Safety Team

Representatives from each area below are recommended for inclusion on a building safety team with a building administrator serving as chair of the team. Like the district team, this team should be connected to the overall school improvement process. In some buildings, one person may fill more than one of the suggested positions.

- School principal
- Teacher
- School nurse
- School counselor
- Bus driver
- Food service manager
- Custodian or building maintenance
- School secretary
- School resource officer
- Parent(s)
- Community Emergency Response Representative(s)
- Student representatives (middle and high school)

Role and Responsibilities of the Building Safety Team

- Make sure "safe" is in the building mission statement and create a vision of a safe school.
- Conduct policies and procedures, facilities, and safety equipment audits.
- Maintain and analyze accurate and detailed records of all behavior incidents.
- Develop a user-friendly Building Crisis Management Plan (adapted from the District Plan) that can be followed by regular teachers, substitute teachers, staff and students.
- Distribute copies of the Crisis Management Plan and review with staff, parents and community.
- At a minimum, attach a building map (with designated safe places clearly marked) to the plan. Up-to-date blueprints, layouts, and floor prints of school buildings and grounds including information about main leads for gas, water, electricity, cable, telephone, HVAC, alarm and sprinkler systems, location of hazardous materials, elevators, and entrances for community emergency response teams are essential.
- Distribute building maps to all emergency agencies, such as fire department, police, emergency personnel, and local bomb squad experts in the area.
- Coordinate with local emergency management agencies and conduct drills to test crisis response and recovery plans.
- Name a building media spokesperson.
- Evaluate plans and responses to any crisis.

3. Role of Administrative Leaders

Administrators are key leaders in the creation of safe schools. Their attitudes and actions communicate to staff and students the importance and philosophy that they ascribe to this work.

Prevention:
- Bring together students, families, teachers, other administrators, staff, social and mental health professionals, law enforcement, emergency response personnel, security professionals, school board members, the business, and faith communities to collaborate on violence prevention.
- Involve parents in the life of the school and of their children as students.
- Assume leadership in the development and implementation of a school-wide discipline system.
- Establish policies that enhance school safety and address incidences of violent and disruptive behavior.
- Lead by example.

Preparedness:
- Train safety team student members in problem solving, meeting participation, planning, and leadership skills.
- Provide leadership for the District and Building Safety Teams.
- Initiate school safety audits.
- Ensure that students have opportunities to learn violence prevention techniques.
- Know the community commanders and chain of command for the community emergency response team.
- Make certain that insurance coverage is adequate to cover potential damage created by any crisis event.

Response:	▪ Oversee the actions of the building-based Emergency Management Team.
	▪ Keep staff updated on status of the crisis situation as information becomes available.
	▪ Be highly visible to show support and control of the situation.
	▪ Help students feel safe by providing reassurance.
	▪ Have appropriate staff begin a calling/phone tree.
Recovery:	▪ Hold an all-staff meeting before school to update them on the situation, eliminate rumors, and review guidelines for dealing with the aftermath of the crisis event, including procedures for referring students to counseling.
	▪ Hold a staff meeting to permit faculty to process their reaction to the crisis.
	▪ Be open about own emotionality when dealing with the faculty.
	▪ Implement plan for providing qualified counselors that may be needed by students and staff.
	▪ Maintain both an information and special call-in line for victims and their families.
	▪ Keep in close contact with injured victims and/or surviving family members.
	▪ Ensure that thank you notes are sent with a message of appreciation for any contributions made.
	▪ Oversee activities related to memorials and tributes.
	▪ Work with investigating authorities to help complete any investigations.
	▪ Deal with a deceased student's desk, locker, name on school records.
	▪ Design procedures for closing a mourning period.
	▪ Direct School Safety Teams to evaluate the Crisis Management Plan.

4. Role of School Staff

Although School Boards and school administrators set the direction of and climate for schools, it is teachers who are in the first line for school safety because of their direct contact with students. For this reason, teachers must be directly involved and supported in developing and implementing programs that foster school safety.

Prevention:	▪ Regularly invite parents to talk about their children's progress and any concerns they might have.
	▪ Model appropriate behaviors.
	▪ Learn and teach students skills in problem solving, anger management, social skills, and conflict resolution.
	▪ Participate in the development and implementation of a proactive school-wide discipline system.
	▪ Serve as mentors to troubled children and youth.
	▪ Provide leadership opportunities for at-risk students.
	▪ Promote the success of *all* students.
	▪ Take responsibility for *all* students in the school.

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Preparedness:	▪ If asked, participate on the School Safety Team and support its recommendations. ▪ Learn to identify the warning signs of potentially violent behaviors. ▪ Report to the principal as quickly as possible any threats, overheard discussions of weapons, signs of gang activity or other violent behavior.
Response:	▪ Get students out of harm's way. ▪ Contact the appropriate administrator or person on the Emergency Management Team (EMT). ▪ Remain with students until notified by appropriate personnel on what actions to take. ▪ Upon appropriate notification, follow the crisis response plan for the specific situation. ▪ Carry out specified communications with designated individuals. ▪ Remain calm and keep order among students
Recovery:	▪ Cooperate with law enforcement in their investigation. ▪ Help victims and students re-enter the school. ▪ Modify assigned work to accommodate for the situation. ▪ Provide accurate information to students to dispel rumors. ▪ Identify students' symptoms of stress and grief. ▪ Provide outlets for students' grief and stress.

5. Role of Students

In a school environment, students are often the most underused resource. They are the eyes and ears that can make a difference and must be actively involved in school safety in a number of different ways, such as:

Prevention:	▪ Know and follow the school's safety policies. ▪ Follow the school rules/code of conduct. ▪ Confide with an adult (parent, teacher, counselor, etc.) when they personally experience symptoms of depression. ▪ Listen to the concerns of friends and encourage them to seek appropriate help. ▪ Learn to avoid becoming victims – avoiding high-risk situations and seeking help from adults. ▪ Actively participate in school safety/violence prevention programs such as conflict managers, problem solving teams, student courts, peer mediation, and community service. ▪ Help organize, participate in, and encourage peers to participate in after school activities – school and community-based. ▪ Find ways to help redirect peers' negative leadership behaviors to positive leadership. Student bullies often have innate leadership skills. ▪ Act as positive role models for peers and younger students. ▪ Serve as a big brother/big sister, peer tutor, or mentor for a younger student.

- Refrain from teasing, bullying, and harassing other students, and be tolerant of their differences.
- Learn ways to resist negative peer pressure.
- Speak out and refuse to participate in negative or criminal behavior.
- Start a school crime watch.
- Develop and implement anti-violence activities in the school and community.

Preparedness:
- Serve on the School Safety Team to provide their perspective on how to promote school safety.
- Work with teachers and administrators to develop a safe way to report threats.
- Learn who to go to with information and concerns about known or potential violence, bullying, and harassment.
- Immediately report suspicious behaviors, threats of violence, drug sale or use, bullying and victimization, vandalism, or suicide to school officials or other responsible adult by speaking directly, sending e-mail, or using other means such as anonymous notes or hotlines.

Response:
- In the absence of adult direction, decide where it is safest to be and remain there.
- If a violent situation occurs, notify the first available adult.
- Follow instructions of school, law enforcement, or other emergency response personnel.
- Assist teachers and staff in assessing who is accounted for and who is not.
- If able, assist injured persons. Calm and reassure peers.

Recovery:
- Share all relevant information with law enforcement, teachers, and school staff.
- Do not speculate or perpetuate rumors.
- Seek counseling and other opportunities to deal with stress and grief.

6. Role of Parents

Parental support is key to the success of any school initiative, and school safety is no exception. Demonstrating an interest in the lives of their children and working to maintain open lines of communication are critical. Enhance parental involvement by encouraging them to:

Prevention:
- Help the school teach their children to be safe.
- Take an active role in their children's education.
- Establish, teach, and consistently enforce reasonable limits of behavior.
- Become involved in, understand, support, and discuss with their children the school's discipline policies, practices, and code of conduct.
- Model appropriate behaviors, and demonstrate healthy ways to express anger and relieve stress.

- Promote a healthy lifestyle in their home by prohibiting the illegal or irresponsible use of tobacco, alcohol, or other drugs.
- Encourage and support their children's involvement in school or community-based after school activities.
- Get to know their children's friends and families. Establish a network to exchange information with other parents.
- Monitor and supervise their children's reading materials, television watching, and Internet use.
- Monitor and supervise their children's whereabouts. Make their home a welcoming and safe haven where their children want to bring their friends.
- Listen, talk to, and show interest in their children's activities, friends, and school.
- Set curfews when their children are young.
- Talk to employers about special considerations that will help them participate in their children's activities.
- Become involved in programs such as neighborhood watch.
- Participate, as appropriate, in programs such as parenting skills, conflict resolution and anger management.
- Secure any weapons that are in the home and ensure that their children are trained in gun safety.

Preparedness:
- If asked, participate on the School Safety Team and/or safety planning sessions.
- Be aware of warning signs for potential problems in their children, be alert to any changes in their behavior, and seek help if indicated.
- Communicate specific incidents and concerns about safety for their child and other children to school personnel.
- Be informed about the school's safety policies and programs and discuss them with their children.

Response:
- Go to and remain in designated parent gathering area.
- Follow district plan for reuniting with their child(ren).

Recovery:
- Talk to their children about their feelings about the crisis situation and share their own feelings, too. Give them information they can understand.
- Reassure their children about their mutual safety.
- Talk to their children's teachers and work with them to help their children.
- Hold and touch their children and allow them to grieve.
- Recognize and help children with their reactions and seek counseling if needed.

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7. Role of the Community

Community members play a vital role in school safety and the Crisis Management Plan. Emergency service personnel and law enforcement must be involved in any crisis situation and the wider community can provide valuable support in violence prevention.

Prevention:
- Business:
  - Adopt family friendly policies that support parents in their job of raising their children.
  - Provide jobs, internships, and opportunities for student mentoring.
  - Adopt and support a local school.
  - Establish community service programs as an effective alternative to suspension to provide meaningful learning experiences for student and an opportunity for community involvement.
  - Be mentors for at-risk youth.
  - Support the school by providing needed materials, facilities, services, etc.
  - Provide time off for students to study and extra time off during exams.
- Law Enforcement
  - Develop and maintain working partnerships with schools, including effective communication.
  - Maintain good relationships with students and their families.
  - Develop and implement a School Resource Officer program.
  - Work with schools and local businesses to reduce truancy.
  - Consult with and train schools about school security measures.

Preparedness:
- Members of law enforcement, emergency service, and the business community participate on the School Safety Team.
- Form and train a community response team.
- Develop a written memorandum of understanding with each of the major emergency, safety agencies, and youth-serving agencies in the district, including police, sheriff, fire, emergency medical, social/welfare and the juvenile court.

Response:
- Crisis response personnel respond immediately when notified of a crisis situation.
- Implement Crisis Response plan.
- Develop lines of communication with school administrators and building-based Emergency Management Team.
- Assist parents/guardians to locate their children.
- Counselors report to the counseling area.

Recovery:
- Community Counselors:
  -- Work with the Emergency Management Team, if possible.
  -- Cancel appointments and meetings that are not emergencies.
  -- Maintain a list of students who are counseled.
  -- Organize and provide individual and group counseling.

- Community-at-Large
  -- Volunteer time and resources.
  -- Provide services to meet the needs of victims and their families.
  -- Dispel rumors.
- Law Enforcement
  -- Conduct a thorough investigation including debriefing of those
     present at the crisis.
  -- Work with school to prosecute those who have committed crimes.
  -- Coordinate news releases with school.
  -- Critique the department's response to any serious crisis situation.

B. Safety Audits

The focus of safety audits is on the policies and procedures, physical environment, and equipment in the district. The purpose is to determine whether or not the environment promotes safety or actually may be contributing to the existing or future problems. Conducting safety audits are among the first tasks undertaken by both District and Building School Safety Teams. While the District Team tackles Policies and Procedures, Building Teams can begin to audit equipment and their buildings and grounds. Involvement of law enforcement personnel will enhance the equipment and building and grounds audits because of their specialized training in the relationship between environmental design and the commission of crime. These audits should then be submitted to the District Team. (*See Section V for Audit Templates.*)

1. Policies and Procedures Audit

Crisis prevention is primarily dependent on a culture or climate devoted to safety that is based on policies implemented throughout the district. As the team audits policies and procedures, they are encouraged to consider the ideas listed below:

- The District's mission statement includes "safety."
- Policies conform with the Fourteenth Amendment, which requires school administrators to apply equally and fairly all school rules and to provide due process procedures for students.
- School policies are included that protect students and staff against:
  -- Weather related, fire, accident, violent, and other emergency situations;
  -- Criminal activity;
  -- Identifiably dangerous students;
- A system for data collection is in place that will inform decision-making and document disciplinary actions:
  -- collect data on incidents on school property, including transportation and off-site school sponsored events.
  -- review weekly to assess any patterns or trends
  -- develop prevention and intervention strategies to address incidents that threaten the school's safety and security
- Student handbooks serve as meaningful guides for student safety and conduct:
  -- promote proactive practices that provide students with positive behavioral supports.
  -- communicate clearly to students and their parents board policy related to student conduct
  -- have a plan for ensuring that the content is understood by all students and their parents

2. Environmental/Facilities Audit (Walkabout)

Well-designed schools may preclude the need to "target harden" them by focusing on such things as the installation of metal detectors and surveillance cameras. Crime Prevention through Environmental Design, as presented in a special program of the National Crime Prevention Council, brings the knowledge of the policing community to the design of schools so that the physical environment can become an aid to the prevention of crime and violence in schools.

Every three years completion of a comprehensive school environmental/safety audit is recommended, with annual review of those areas in need of improvement. This audit allows the School Safety Team to assess current safety conditions in and around each school's buildings, grounds, and immediate neighborhood and helps Team members to:

- identify and address concerns related to physical safety and building security; and
- identify any areas of student concern regarding safety on and around school grounds or at school sponsored events.

Team members might consider implementing additional building security measures. Suggestions of such measures include:

- Install clearly visible and welcoming signs pointing the way to parking, entry and to the office. Good signage helps legitimate visitors feel welcome and prevent them from being viewed suspiciously by school officials.
- Designate specific points of entry to enhance surveillance and to discourage intruders and others that may not have business at the school.
- Consider modifying school design and size. Changes that might have a positive effect include reducing a school's size or dividing existing large schools into district 'learning communities.'
- Consider requiring student, staff and visitor identification badges. They help identify individuals who may not have legitimate business on school property and provide instant recognition for those who do.
- Consider a law enforcement presence (e.g., school resource officers – SROs) on school grounds to provide a way for students to interact with law enforcement in positive way.
- Explore need for, value, and feasibility of "target hardening" (e.g., installing security devices such as metal detectors or surveillance cameras).

3. Safety Equipment Audit

Quick response to an emergency situation will depend on the availability of proper safety equipment. A safety equipment inventory is the best way to insure that equipment and training in the use of the equipment is adequate to meet the needs of the school. Each building needs to conduct its own audit. When conducting an audit, School Safety Team members should ask themselves what is needed to respond to a crisis situation. For instance:

- Identify means by which people can communicate from any area of the school grounds.
  -- What: do we need? cellular phones? walkie-talkies?
  -- How many do we need?
  -- Who should have them?
  -- How do we designate their use?
- Provide a means of communication from classrooms.
  -- Does every classroom have a phone?
  -- With access to cellular phones, does every classroom need a regular phone?
  -- Do phones have caller ID?
- Do we have an air horn and/or bullhorn?
- Is a battery-operated radio available in every building?
- Does staff have easy access to e-mail in your district?
- Has staff been trained in the use of fire extinguishers?
- Do you have portable classrooms in your district?
  -- What are the crisis procedures for the portables?
  -- What is the means of communication for the portables?
- How many staff members are trained in CPR and emergency first aid? Who are they?
- Is all emergency equipment in working order?

B. Insurance

One of the first questions that many people have in their emergency response is how their new insurance protection will perform. This section is a guide on how to prepare your insurance program to meet any emergency situation.

Prevention

Like any good emergency plan, your insurance protection is only as good as the work that goes into it. The Iowa Association of School Boards (IASB) Safety Group Insurance Program, underwritten by EMC Insurance Companies of Des Moines, covers all schools in Iowa. This program automatically provides certain critical insurance coverage:

- Property insurance covers all school-owned buildings and contents.
- Liability insurance protects the school and its employees for premises and operations including a crisis in the schools that might include an act of violence, fire, or explosion where it can be shown that the school was negligent in its operation of emergency response.
- Workers' Compensation covers injury to school employees injured during a crisis situation.
- All schools share Special Excess Liability coverage for catastrophic loss situations.

Preparedness

Even though the IASB insurance program has a wide range of insurance coverage designed specifically for schools, there are certain things that every district should do to make sure its insurance program is up-to-date.

- Conduct a thorough review of insurance coverage with its local insurance agent yearly.
- Review carefully property values on buildings and contents to ensure they are up-to-date.
- Store a complete inventory of property content off premises. During and after a crisis, it may be difficult to reconstruct property values, particularly contents.
- Photograph or make videotapes of current school buildings both inside and out.

Crisis Response

During any kind of crisis situation, the emergency plan is extremely important. Having such a plan and following it closely will prevent many potential liability claims.

- Document details of the event in the weeks and months following it. As soon as possible, dictate the details and recollections to capture a kind of hard copy documentation that can prove useful later for both property and potential liability claims.
- Create photographic evidence by recording the aftermath of any emergency. Digital cameras are especially helpful for this.
- Notify your insurance agent as soon as the emergency is over. Ensure that both the agent and Employers Mutual are fully informed as quickly as possible.

Recovery

During the recovery phase, it will be important to deal with the insurance adjuster on a regular basis whether it involves damage to school property or injury to personnel, students, or the public.

- Maintain good public relations and regular contact with the media.
- Provide the adjuster and school personnel with easy access to the school site involved.
- Retrieve off premises records of property values and lists of employees, students, and their parents when the school site is not accessible.
- In the case of potential liability claims, the recovery phase may extend for several months or even years depending on the severity of potential injuries.

D. Training

Crisis Management Plans cannot work without training. Administrators, teachers, staff and students all need training and practice in safety and emergency procedures.

Just as important, however, is ongoing training in the areas of classroom management and sound discipline practices. Making a commitment to developing a culture of safety is essential if we are to preserve schools as safe havens for learning.

All staff should regularly receive school safety and violence prevention information as part of systemwide staff development. The items below serve as a checklist of areas to cover in a staff development plan devoted to the safety of both students and staff.

TRAINING	TARGET AUDIENCES								
	Administrators	Teachers	Para-Educators	Support Staff	Bus Drivers	Students	Parents	School Safety Team	Emergency Response Team
PREVENTION									
▪ Classroom management		✔	✔						
▪ Behavioral expectations and procedures within the first two weeks of school.	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔			
▪ Teaching interactions for addressing student behavior	✔	✔	✔		✔				
▪ Negotiation skills.	✔	✔			✔	✔			
▪ Conflict resolution	✔	✔			✔				
▪ Personal safety training	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
▪ De-escalation techniques,	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔				
▪ Social skills instruction						✔			
▪ Problem solving, meeting participation, planning, and leadership skills.						✔		✔	
▪ Behavior expectations and procedures first 2 weeks of school with booster sessions throughout the year.		✔							
▪ Role of law enforcement	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔				
▪ Defusing anger and de-escalating conflict, e.g., Mandt and C.P.I.	✔	✔			✔				

TRAINING	TARGET AUDIENCES								
	Administrators	Teachers	Para-Educators	Support Staff	Bus Drivers	Students	Parents	School Safety Team	Emergency Response Team
PREPAREDNESS									
▪ Conducting Safety Audits								✔	
▪ Legal responsibilities for the enforcement of state and federal laws	✔				✔				
▪ Early warning signs for potential violence and/or suicide, including knowing the appropriate steps in referring for help	✔	✔	✔		✔		✔	✔	
▪ Appropriate response to threats from students and parents	✔	✔		✔	✔				
▪ Appropriate responses to fighting (both with and without a weapon)	✔	✔	✔		✔	✔			
RESPONSE									
▪ Crisis Response Procedures	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
▪ How to handle phone calls and the media during a crisis.	✔								✔
▪ Implementation of the Crisis Response Plan	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
RECOVERY									
▪ Recognition of post traumatic stress symptoms	✔	✔	✔	✔			✔	✔	
▪ How and when to refer students for counseling.	✔	✔							

E.   School-Based Emergency Management Team (EMT)

1. Membership

Administrator-in-Charge:	Coordinates and oversees the overall emergency response effort, including making necessary notifications and coordinating the police, fire and medical response.
First Responders	Provide temporary aid until medical teams arrive.
Site Coordinators:	Go to the site of the emergency and control access to it. Preserve the crime scene until law enforcement arrives to take control.
Police/Fire/Medical Coordinators:	Meet arrival of emergency personnel and direct them to appropriate places. Go to the front of the school to control and direct parents, media, and central office personnel to appropriate locations.
Sweep Team Coordinators:	Form teams of three from adults without other supervisory responsibilities to sweep and check the building – the hallways, restrooms, and other classroom areas for students and outsiders. Pick up student lists from teachers. Identify missing students and communicate them to the command center.
Media Coordinator:	Coordinate work with the media including preparation of a news statement and making arrangements for interviews.
Parent Coordinators:	Assume responsibility of parents who come to the scene, keep them informed about their children, and, when appropriate, help them connect with their children and take them home.
Recorder:	Maintain a log with the sequence and times of events.

Adapted from Blauvert, P. (1999).

2. Criteria for EMT Team Membership

The Emergency Management Team is made up of those individuals in a school that will take action in a crisis situation before the arrival of professional crisis response teams. Selection of the right individuals to serve on the team is critical. Selection criteria might include:
- Individuals who are recognized and respected in the school
- People who are good listeners, good communicators, accepted by staff as fair and impartial, skilled negotiators, good at crowd control, cool headed, skilled counselors
- Those with specialized training, such as CPR, first aid, de-escalation procedures, etc.

3. Suggestions
- Make size of team proportional to size of school (e.g., elementary schools – 5-6, middle schools - 8-9, high schools – 10-12)
- If members are classroom teachers, identify substitutes to cover their classes and place their names on the EMT membership list.
- Appoint a recorder to keep track of times and the sequence of events.
- Pre-assign responsibilities.

F. Emergency Kits

To provide maximum safety and security at the time of crisis, the building and every classroom needs to develop updated emergency kits. These kits should be in kept in secure location, yet readily available in case of emergency. Below is a sample list of contents for each kit.

1. Building Emergency Kits (locate in strategic positions)

- Name tags
- Floor plans, evacuation routes
- Location of utility shut-off for gas, power and water
- Location of first-aid equipment and fire extinguishers
- Phone/e-mail lists for emergency response agencies and hospitals
- Complete phone lists for staff (home, office, cell, pager)
- Student registration list
- Class schedules of students and staff
- Current student photos (e.g., yearbook, class pictures, student IDs)
- Phone lists for media contacts
- Phone lists/e-mail for key communicators
- Volunteers and parent organization contact lists and phone numbers
- Guidelines for canceling events
- Basic office supplies, such as notepads, pens, pencils, tape, felt pens
- Log book
- Hand radios and batteries
- Bus rosters and routes
- First aid supplies
- Placards with directional words (Parents, Counselors, Media, Volunteers, Keep Out)

2. Classroom Emergency Kits

Each teacher should have an individual kit whose articles will vary according to a teacher's responsibilities. Children can help decide what might be useful. *A 5-gallon plastic bucket with lid provides a portable, secure kit container that can also be used for water if necessary.*

- Class roll sheet
- Emergency cards
- Laminated copy of response plan
- Laminated map of campus and area
- First-aid kit
- Flashlight(s)
- Spiral Notebook
- Tape (duct & masking)
- Whistle
- Scissors
- White towel(s)
- Safety pins
- Incident and Bomb Threat Report Forms
- Baby wipes
- Soap
- Plastic bags
- Plastic cups
- Bright plastic vest
- Cap
- Activity book(s)
- Permanent markers
- Pencils
- Toilet paper
- Sunscreen
- Umbrella
- Tennis balls
- Frisbee

Avoid anything perishable

G. Drills and Exercises

Drills and exercises must be included in any crisis management plan to ensure its effectiveness. They allow students and staff to practice their roles during a crisis and enable identification of weaknesses in the plans. Even an excellent plan may not be dependable without drills and exercises. If it's not, liability could become an issue in an emergency situation.

To be effective drills should be scheduled regularly and customized to fit various emergencies. (See Section VB, "Templates.") Before any drill or exercise, provide staff with an opportunity to discuss the plan and review responsibilities. This does not mean staff should know when a drill or exercise would take place. Listed below are three types of drills and three types of exercises.

TYPE	DESCRIPTION
1. Shelter-in-Place Drills	Shelter-in-Place is the purposeful act of keeping students and staff in the building in a pre-determined area. These drills may take place in a classroom or other predetermined safe place. These drills are completed by individual classrooms, although all classes in the school may participate simultaneously. They are used for such incidents as an intruder, a tornado, a missing child, a hostage situation, presence of an angry parent, or death of a student or staff member. Terms to signal students to take action such as "take cover" or "get down" should be identified and consistent throughout the district. These drills should also be conducted in common areas.
2. Evacuation Drills	An evacuation drill covers the procedures used to evacuate a classroom, part of a building or the entire building. Evacuation drills help identify the best back up or alternate evacuate routes. Do not rely on a single route. It may be unavailable, depending on the crisis situation. Evacuations are usually used for such things as a fire, bomb threat, or facility-related problem.
3. Full-Scale Exercise	This is a comprehensive exercise that involves a school-wide drill and simulated problems such as injuries and structural damage. It may include outside 'players' such as police, fire, and rescue teams. Minimize the use of students in role playing situations. This is likely to create unnecessary anxiety or cause children to be more fearful of a possible crisis.
Special Purpose Drills and Exercises:	
4. School Drills	A school drill is any school-wide drill that may or not include evacuation. Such drills are useful in helping test specific procedures such as taking roll, setting up a command post or first aid station, evacuating special needs students or conducting a 'sweep' of the entire school.
5. Table-top Exercise	A tabletop exercise involves only adult staff members and uses a scenario to help staff plan responses to specific incidents. Often designed as a 'walk-through' and/or brainstorming activity, it usually includes representatives from local emergency response agencies (police, fire, and rescue). The more key players involved, the better.
6. Functional Exercise	A functional exercise tests one function of the plan – first aid, communications, parent-child reunification, emergency transportation, etc. It is a useful technique for resetting any portions of the plan that might not have worked smoothly in prior drills.

Evaluating Drills and Exercises
After drills and exercises, the Emergency Management Team and other appropriate participants should conduct a **formal** debriefing session. The purpose is to discuss, critique and evaluate the drill or exercise and learn from it. It should be positive, honest and constructive. If problems occurred, they should not be ignored or minimized. They should be used to formulate plans for improvement.

H. Dealing with the Media

It will be much easier to deal with the media in the time of crisis if the school is prepared and has a cordial existing relationship with local media. As professional disseminators of information, well informed media can be your best ally in a time of crisis. In advance of a crisis:

PREVENTION:
- Encourage local education reporters to write features on the various prevention activities being implemented.
- Submit occasional press releases to local media about the school's safety program to foster a compatible working relationship as well as inform the community about the school's efforts to maintain a safe school environment.

PREPAREDNESS:
- Designate a media spokesperson at the district and each building level, (not the superintendent or principal who will be very busy during a crisis).
- Develop a relationship with local media, and let them know that you will provide them with information as soon as you have it.
- Develop a media kit to be used in crisis situations with relevant information about safety prevention techniques developed by the District. Such a kit should also include:
  -- name of contact person at each school
  -- information about potential emotional responses to crises so the
      media can be more sensitive in interviewing, reporting, etc.
  -- a school map.
- Develop a sample press release for crisis situations so only blanks need to be completed at the time of a crisis – fire, bomb threat, death, etc. Include parent pick-up site announcement, 'do not call school' announcements, etc.

DURING A CRISIS:
- Limit contact with the media to the media spokesperson;
- Be prepared, stay calm, and always be honest.
- Set boundaries where the media is allowed to go and have them escorted to a designated area.
- Don't speculate so reporters won't be tempted to speculate.

AFTER THE CRISIS:
- Try to control any interviews with short direct answers and say what you want to say;
- Stick to the facts and avoid hypotheticals.
- Avoid saying "no comment." Say "I don't know" and get back to the interviewer with correct information later.
- With the assistance of the media coordinator, prepare a written news release.

* Suggestion: Have law enforcement answer questions about any crime and the media representative and/or principal answer questions about the school's response to the incident.

For additional information about the role of the media in crisis situations, check out the following websites: The International Association of Chiefs of Police. http://www.theiacp.org/pubinfo/pubs/pslc/; *Communicating About School Safety.* (March, 2001). Washington State School Director's Association. http://www.keepschoolssafe.org/wssd.htm

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G. Recordkeeping

1. Types of Records

Records generated as part of the crisis management process serve two purposes—the obvious documentation of events, and, more importantly, instruments to guide problem solving in order to improve the safety of the school environment and to deliver appropriate services needed by individual students. The records defined below fulfill both of these purposes.

- *Discipline Records:* These records have typically been used simply as a means to document disciplinary actions taken with individual students. Actually, they yield a wealth of information that, when analyzed, can help the School Safety Team to make decisions about interventions needed to address system level issues, problems that groups of students have in common, and problems with individual students. They also permit monitoring of the overall success of the school's safety program. Electronic systems that analyze and chart discipline records are available to facilitate this work.

- *Incident Profiling:* Blauvert (1999) suggests that schools maintain well-written incident reports that can be used in follow-up activities (e.g., suspension proceedings, court proceedings, lawsuits, etc.) as well as to facilitate prevention of recurrence of incidents, and reduce administrative recordkeeping time. Once a report is generated, Blauvert recommends that it be placed in a filing system organized by reasons students are sent to the office (tardiness, insubordination, fighting, controlled substances, classroom disruption, cheating). This permits easy retrieval and initiates the process of analysis of patterns of problems that can lead to interventions.

- *Anonymous reporting mechanism:* Students need to know that it is in their best interest to report threats to adults yet they often hesitate to break the "conspiracy of silence"(Poland, 2000, October) because they think if they tell they are a "snitch." They don't tell because they fear retaliation, they are uncertain what and whom to tell, they don't take it seriously, or they don't think anything will happen. A mechanism for anonymous reporting can alleviate such concerns. Strategies that can be effective are 1) to ensure students that all threats will be taken seriously and 2) to make sure that every student has someone available to them that they can trust (e.g., a counselor, a favorite teacher, a coach, a parent). Some districts have subscribed to phone-in crisis lines; others have a safety pledge that all students and their parents sign

- *Record of crisis:* Blauvert (1999) recommends that an individual be assigned to collect newspaper articles, taping of radio broadcasts and television coverage in order to make a record of the crisis situation, including the crisis response. This record can provide a valuable tool for troubleshooting the effectiveness of a district's crisis management plan.

- *Copies of the District and Building Crisis Management Plans:* Copies of plans should be placed in strategic places to ensure that key individuals are aware of them and that they are available as references during a crisis situation.

2. Rules and Policies on Information Sharing

Both Federal and State laws have provisions for sharing personally identifiable information about students. Some violations of school rules also constitute a violation of criminal law, especially infractions involving drugs, weapons, and violence. School officials need to understand and follow the laws that require them to turn over to the police evidence or information about suspected crimes.

School district officials should develop a partnership with local law enforcement to facilitate a better understanding of the laws related to privacy, crime reporting, and information sharing. In Iowa, these laws are identified below. (Further information about these laws is included in the section "Safe Schools Laws and Policies.")

- *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA)*. This Federal law protects the privacy interests of students and their parents through standards designed to discourage abusive and unwarranted disclosure of a student's records that contain personally identifiable information and specifies the conditions under which such information can be shared with law enforcement.

- Federal law and Iowa code outline requirements related to the confidentiality of information pertaining to IDEA '97 eligible individuals.

- Iowa Code defines which student records are confidential, and the requirements for sharing information between a school district, law enforcement, and juvenile justice agencies. (See the "Information Sharing Agreement" at the end of this document.)

3. Distribution of Information

In order to ensure that all who need to know do know the procedures for dealing with crises adopted by the district and the building, copies of the plan need to be widely distributed to individuals or groups who have responsibility for implementation of the plan. Below is an adapted list suggested in "Emergency Planning for Iowa Schools" distributed by the Iowa Department of Education in 1995.

- Board of Education
- Superintendent of Schools
- School Principals
- District and Building School Safety Teams
- Building Emergency Response Teams
- Teachers
- Nurses
- Secretaries
- Custodial Personnel
- Food Service Personnel
- Bus Operators
- Parents (abridged version)
- Police Department*
- Fire Department*
- Highway Patrol (local resident)
- Local Emergency Management Coordinator*
- Local News Media (only the information that will not jeopardize student safety)
- State Emergency Management Division

* *Also provide, or if necessary develop, up-to-date blueprints, layouts, and floor prints of school buildings and grounds including information about main leads for gas, water, electricity, cable, telephone, HVAC, alarm and sprinkler systems, location of hazardous materials, elevators, and entrances.*

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Section II: Early Warning Signs

Why didn't we see it coming? Did the child do or say anything that would have cued us in to the impending crisis? Did we miss an opportunity to help? Early warning signs – certain behavioral and emotional signs – if viewed in context, can signal a troubled child. Such signs may or may not indicate a serious problem, but they should impel us to check out our concerns and address the child's needs.

A. Principles for Identifying Early Warning Signs

Educators and families can increase their ability to recognize early warning signs by establishing supportive relationships with children and youth. **Unfortunately, there is a real danger that early warning signs will be misinterpreted.** While they are intended to protect students, there is potential for harm in labeling individuals as "dangerous." To date, no scientific research has been conducted to determine the efficacy of student profiling nor its success in preventing violent incidents. Use the following principles to ensure that early warning signs are not misinterpreted (Dwyer, K.P., Osher, D. and Warger, 1998, August):

- **Do No Harm.** First and foremost, use early warning signs to identify and help troubled children. Never use early warning signs as a rationale to exclude, isolate, or punish a child, or as a checklist for formally identifying, mislabeling or stereotyping children.

- **Understand violence and aggression within a context.** Violence is contextual. Violent and aggressive behavior may be due to factors that exist within the school, home, or the larger social environment. Some children will act out if stress becomes too great and they lack positive coping skills and have learned to react with aggression.

- **Avoid Stereotypes.** Stereotypes can interfere with – and even harm – a school's ability to help children. Be aware of false cues – including race, socio-economic status, academic ability or physical appearance.

- **View warning signs within a developmental context.** Students express their needs differently in elementary, middle and high school. Know what is developmentally typical behavior, so that individual behavior is not misinterpreted.

- **Understand that children typically exhibit multiple warning signs.** Research confirms that children who are at risk for aggression exhibit more than one warning sign, repeatedly, and with increasing intensity over time. Do not overreact to single signs, words or actions.

B. Early Warning Signs

The potential for identification of potentially dangerous students has become a source of reassurance for some school personnel as well as parents. Extreme caution must be exercised in such an undertaking. No single profile emerged for the shooters in the incidents in the recent past, and profiling can cause inaccurate and unjust identification. Although it is not always possible to predict behavior that will lead to violence, educators and parents can learn to recognize early warning signs that, especially when presented in combination, indicate a need for further analysis to determine appropriate intervention. They should be used to shape intervention practices – such as policies to support training and easy access to a team of specialists trained in evaluating and addressing serious behavioral and academic concern.

For a more complete discussion of the early warning signs presented below, see *Early Warning, Timely Response.* For convenience, they are summarized here. They can serve as an aid to identifying and referring children who may need help. None of these signs alone is sufficient for predicting aggression and violence. Moreover, it is inappropriate – and potentially harmful – to use early warning signs as a checklist against which to match individual children. *Note: Those listed below are not equally significant and they are not presented in order of seriousness.*

- **Social withdrawal.** In some situations, gradual and eventual complete withdrawal can be an important indicator of a troubled child.

- **Excessive feelings of isolation and being alone.** Research has shown that most children who are isolated and appear friendless are not violent. However, in some cases, feelings of isolation are associated with children who behave aggressively and violently.

- **Excessive feelings of rejection**. Many young people experience emotionally painful rejection in the course of growing up. Their response to rejection depends on many background factors. Without support, they may be at risk of expressing distress in negative ways – including violence.

- **Feelings of being picked on and persecuted**. The youth who feels constantly picked on, teased, bullied and humiliated at home or at school may initially withdraw socially. If not given adequate support, some children may vent in inappropriate ways – including possible aggression and violence.

- **Being a victim of violence.** Youth who are victims of violence – including physical or sexual abuse – are sometimes at risk themselves of becoming violent toward themselves or others.

- **Low school interest and poor academic performance.** Poor school achievement can be the result of many factors. It is important to track whether a drastic change in performance and/or poor performance becomes a chronic condition that limits a child's capacity to learn. In some situations, acting out and aggressive behaviors can occur.

- **Expression of violence in writings and drawings.** Youth often express feelings and intentions in their drawings, stories, and poetry. Many children produce work with

violent themes that is harmless when taken in context. However, an overrepresentation of violence that is directed at specific individuals consistently over time may signal emotional problems and potential for violence. Because of the real danger in misdiagnosing such a sign, seek guidance from a qualified professional.

- **Uncontrolled anger.** Everyone gets angry. However, anger expressed frequently and intensely in response to minor irritants may signal potential violent behavior.

- **Impulsive and chronic hitting, intimidating and bullying.** Children – especially young children – often engage in shoving and mild aggression. However, these behaviors can escalate into more serious behaviors if left unattended.

- **History of discipline problems.** Chronic behavior and disciplinary problems may suggest that underlying emotional needs are not being met. These problems may set the stage for the student to engage in aggressive behaviors.

- **Past history of violent and aggressive behavior.** Unless provided with support and counseling, a youth who has a history of aggressive or violent behavior is likely to repeat those behaviors. Those who show an early pattern of antisocial behavior frequently and across multiple settings are particularly at risk.

- **Intolerance and prejudicial attitudes.** All children and youth have likes and dislikes. However, an intense prejudice toward others based on racial, ethnic, religious, sexual orientation, etc. – when coupled with other factors – may lead to violent assaults against those who are perceived to be different.

- **Drug and alcohol use.** Apart from being unhealthy, drug and alcohol use reduces self-control and exposes youth to violence, either as perpetrators, as victims, or both.

- **Affiliation with gangs.** Gangs that support anti-social values and behavior cause fear and stress among other students. Youth who are influenced by these groups may act in violent or aggressive ways in certain situations.

- **Inappropriate access to, possession of, and use of firearms.** Youth who inappropriately possess or have access to firearms can have an increased risk for violence. Research shows they also have a higher probability of becoming victims.

- **Serious threats of violence.** Idle threats are a common response to frustration. Alternatively, one of the most reliable indicators that a youth is likely to commit a dangerous act toward self or others is a detailed and specific threat to use violence.

C. Imminent Warning Signs

Unlike early warning signs, imminent warning signs indicate a student is very close to behaving in a potentially dangerous way to self and/or to others. Imminent warning signs require an immediate response. They are usually presented as a sequence of overt, serious, hostile behaviors and are evident to more than one staff member or family member. They may include:
- Serious physical fighting with peers or family members
- Severe destruction of property
- Severe rage for seemingly minor reasons

- Detailed threats of lethal violence
- Possession and/or use of firearms and other weapons
- Other self-injurious behaviors or threat of suicide

When warning signs indicate danger is imminent, safety must **always** be the first consideration. Immediate intervention by school authorities, and possibly law enforcement, is needed when a student has presented a detailed plan to harm others or is carrying a weapon, particularly a firearm, and has threatened to use it. In situations where students present other threatening behaviors, **parents should be informed of the concerns immediately.** School authorities are also obligated to seek assistance from appropriate agencies such as child and family services and community mental health.

D. Team referrals

Any school safety plan should address both prevention and early intervention as well as procedures for dealing with crises when they occur. When school staff notice early warning signs in a student, a system of interventions should be in place to address the concerns.

In Iowa, school districts use a problem solving or solution-focused approach to develop intervention plans designed to ameliorate problems. This system usually includes a Building/Teacher/Student Assistance Team primarily comprised of building-based staff who collaborate with parents and, when appropriate, the student to develop strategies that will provide students with the positive supports they need to overcome any difficulties they may be experiencing. Special services teams that include psychologist, social workers, consultants, speech-language pathologists, and other support personnel from Area Education Agencies (AEAs) are also assigned to buildings and participate in this problem solving/solution-focused process.

Some schools will require more complex and intensive interventions that necessitate the involvement of or referral to community-based mental health professionals. These interventions are usually multi-faceted. Schools should build relationships with community partners in order to facilitate collaboration on behalf of their students and have a process in place for referring to outside agencies. In some communities, agencies are placing mental health professionals in schools. Still others have agreements with family assistance programs to which they can make referrals.

For more information about how to respond when early warning signs are observed, see the document *Early Warning, Timely Response* and the information briefs on "Early Intervention" and "Positive Behavioral Supports" in other sections of this handbook.

Section III. Crisis Response

A. Emergency Response Plan

Quick and responsible action during a crisis situation results from proper planning and training. Use the following checklist to assess the completeness of your emergency response plan:

The plan includes:
- Recommendations from the Safety Audits
- Roles & responsibilities of Emergency Management Team, administrative leaders, staff, students, parents
- Step-by step intervention/response procedures for a variety of crisis situations.
- A communication plan that includes audiences that need to receive communication during a crisis, channels of communication for each type of crisis, who calls whom, and an emergency contact list with names and phone numbers.
- Identification of a media liaison and designation of a news briefing area
- Clear strategies for dealing with the media.
- A process for securing immediate external support, e.g., police, other community agencies
- A full and ongoing evaluation of all components.
- Staff training in a range of skills from dealing with escalating classroom situations to responding to a serious crisis.
- Contents for school and classroom emergency kits and maintenance procedures
- Identified safe areas where students and staff should go during a crisis
- Contingency provisions

B. Examples of Responses

Specific responses to various emergencies that indicate procedures, delineate responsibility, and provide guidelines for shelter-in-place or evacuation should be included in the plan. Sample responses to specific incidents are listed below. Since most Iowa schools already have effective Response Plans for weather and fire related emergencies, they are not specifically outlined in this section.

1. Classroom Conflict/Disruptive Student
- Keep calm and do not raise your voice.
- Do not touch students who are agitated or angry.
- Try to keep the student seated.
- Reassure both the involved student(s) and the class as a whole.
- Seek help from the office either by calling or sending a student.

2. Fights
- Evaluate the severity of the fight.
- Do not physically get in the middle of a fight to try to restrain fighters. Instead, get help.
- Demonstrate confidence by walking briskly and giving commands in a calm, firm, and authoritative voice. This communicates to students that you are there and that you want the fight to stop immediately.
- Separate participants, if you can do so without harm to yourself.
- Disperse student spectators from the fight.
- Remove participants to a neutral area.
- Get medical attention, if needed.
- Obtain identification and call students by name.

- Notify building and district administrators.
- Determine if there is a need to involve law enforcement.
- Handle any media requests through media spokesperson.
- Meet with staff, students and parents, if necessary.
- Provide counseling as needed.

3. Armed Attack by Student or Intruder

- Assess the situation and remain calm.
- If possible, notify the administrator-in-charge, and call 911.
- Administrator-in-charge declare "Code Red" if appropriate.
- Determine whether to shelter-in-place or evacuate.
- Remain calm and try to isolate the individual with the weapon.
- If close to the armed individual:
   -- keep a safe distance and don't make sudden movements.
   -- negotiate with the individual, if it seems appropriate.
- Await the arrival of the police and provide assistance as needed.
- (Staff) follows appropriate crisis procedures and instructions of administrator-in-charge, and law enforcement.
- Provide first aid if needed.
- Secure medical attention for anyone injured.
- Debrief with school administrators and law enforcement.
- Hold meeting(s) with staff, parents, and students.
- Handle all press and media inquiries through media spokesperson.
- Provide counseling as needed.
- Write a letter to all parents and staff.

4. Suicide Threatened/Attempted/Accomplished

- Assess the situation. Treat all verbal and written threats as a serious matter.
- Send for the principal and counselor.
- Call 911.
- Contact a family member.
- Appoint a faculty member to accompany the ambulance to the hospital to act as a liaison between the hospital and school if no family member is present.
- Handle any media inquiries through a media spokesperson.
- Inform staff and students.
- Provide grief counseling, if necessary.
- Write a letter to all parents about the death.

5. Bomb Threat

Instruct all personnel, especially anyone who is likely to answer the phones, to follow an established protocol if a bomb threat is reported. It should include, but may not be limited to:

- If the threat is called in –
   -- Keep caller on line as long as possible. Ask him/her to repeat information.
   -- Write down information in the caller's own words and record the information on a report form. (See Section VB, "Templates for Developing a Plan.")
   -- Respond to the caller as calmly as possible.
   -- Ask the caller for specific information, such as location of bomb and time bomb will go off.

-- Inform the caller that the building is occupied and that detonation of a bomb could result in serious injury or death.
-- If possible, have more than one person listen to call.
- Notify the principal or designee, who will immediately phone 911 and contact security.
- Call the superintendent's office to ensure that necessary persons are notified.
- Immediately dispatch the EMT and evacuate the building when instructed to do so by designated authority, and ensure that all students, teachers and staff are at a safe distance from the building (1000-3000 feet recommended). Do not use the fire alarms, radios, cell phones or electronic bells because they can activate bomb.
- Establish a command post outside the building at least 1000 feet from the building.
- Designate a specific area for the media and have a designated media spokesperson. (*Note: The more publicity bomb threats receive, the more likely that repeat threats will be received.*)
- Communicate to parents after the incident is resolved.
- All students and staff members should be advised to report suspicious or unusual objects or packages immediately.

6. Death or Serious Accident/Injury at School (Student or Staff Member)
- Notify principal and district administrator.
- Remove onlookers from the area.
- Call 911.
- Contact family member.
- Appoint a faculty member to accompany the ambulance to the hospital to act as a liaison between the hospital and school if no family member is present.
- Handle any media inquiries through media spokesperson.
- Inform staff and students.
- Provide grief counseling, if needed.
- Write a letter to all parents about the death.

7. Death of Student or Staff Member (Not on School Grounds)
- Upon notification of death, hold a staff meeting to inform and review procedures.
- Contact family of the deceased to offer support and obtain information.
- Observe the reaction of students and offer grief counseling.
- Secure the belongings of the deceased until they can be released to a family member.
- Notify staff, parents, and students (when developmentally appropriate) of funeral arrangements.
- Work with family(ies) on memorial plans. If the death is a suicide, do not memorialize the student and thereby the act.

Other Areas that May Warrant Attention:
- Missing or runaway students
- Unarmed trespasser
- Gangs
- Riots
- Bus accidents
- Natural disasters
- Illicit drug or alcohol use or distribution

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Section IV. Recovery

A comprehensive Crisis Management Plan must contain provisions for the aftermath of a crisis and assisting persons who were affected by the crisis – students, parents, teachers and school officials, and emergency personnel. Most students and staff will fully recover with the support of family, friends, and school personnel. The ideas listed below will help hasten that recovery.

A. Identify Resources

Additional services may be needed in the district should staff or an individual building not be able to deal adequately with the situation. Anticipate that long-term follow-up will be required for victims and their families, students, and staff during the period of recovery.

- Agreements may be made with counselors from surrounding districts to help during a crisis.
- Agreements may be made with local clergy, mental health professionals, and other agencies. Talk with officials from other schools that have lived through crisis situations.

B. Provide Support to Students and Staff

- Recognize that confusion, disorganization and difficulty in decision making are normal reactions to a crisis – for students and staff.
- Carefully consider the process of resuming normal operations and how students and staff are reintroduced to school facilities.
- Have district counselors consult with teachers to help them deal with their students' reactions.
- If necessary, implement discussions led by support staff and/or classroom teachers to give children a forum to express their feelings and to understand how classmates are coping.
- Provide one-on-one counseling support for students and staff, if necessary.
- Be sensitive to the effects of a crisis on students and staff and adjust classroom demands accordingly.
- Notify parents immediately if a child is experiencing difficulty in class or is referred for assessment and intervention.
- Provide a forum for teachers and staff to discuss their reactions with one another.
- Plan for "triggering events": return to school in September, holidays, trial of the perpetrator, anniversary date of the shooting, and graduation.

C. Communicate with Parents and Community

Communications with parents and the community at-large is essential following a crisis. At a minimum, inform parents about the situation. Parent/community meetings may be warranted to give everyone a chance to gather and discuss what has happened. If necessary, help arrange for counseling for parents and community members.

D. Follow-up

At the appropriate time (as soon as practicable), review the crisis situation and implementation of the crisis management plan. Determine what lessons have been learned, if any, and how these lessons may help the school be better prepared for any future crisis. As part of the review, ask the following:

- What is the probability of a copycat incident? Are we prepared?
- Do we need to modify the plan?
- Do we need more training?
- How can we make our schools safer?

VI. References

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